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STATE FOR AF/S SWALKE AND LAYLWARD

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [KCOR](#) [ZA](#)

SUBJECT: ZAMBIAN GOVERNMENT LAUNCHES "NEW" ANTI-CORRUPTION
CAMPAIGN

REF: A. LUSAKA 583

[B](#). LUSAKA 769

[C](#). LUSAKA 654

Classified By: Ambassador Donald E. Booth for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

[1](#). (C) SUMMARY: During its December 2-11 campaign to celebrate Zambia's ratification of the UN Convention Against Corruption, the Zambian government (GRZ) pledged to implement its National Anti-Corruption Policy; strengthen the Anti-Corruption Commission; establish a Financial Intelligence Unit; introduce anti-corruption legislation; and improve public service delivery. The campaign signaled a shift in the Banda administration's anti-corruption rhetoric from defending itself against criticism over its recent handling of high-profile corruption cases and attacking critics to focusing on its anti-corruption bona fides (refs A-C). Although the GRZ's anti-corruption campaign strikes a positive tone, the government must back up its words with deeds, carry out its pledges and properly resolve ongoing corruption cases. END SUMMARY.

[2](#). (U) During the Zambian government's (GRZ) December 2-11 "United in the Fight Against Corruption" campaign to celebrate Zambia's ratification of the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), the GRZ publicly pledged to combat corruption by implementing its National Anti-Corruption Policy (launched August 27), strengthening the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), and establishing a Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU). On December 2, President Banda touted the new policy as proof that his administration is serious about fighting corruption. He also pledged to strengthen the ACC, the GRZ's lead anti-corruption agency, by establishing ACC Serious Fraud and Forensic Systems units, as well as create and fund an administrative FIU attached to the Bank of Zambia that would meet international standards. The UK's Department for International Development (DFID), which helped draft the GRZ's anti-corruption policy and has provided over USD 13.7 million in financial support to the ACC and TFC, announced December 10 that it will spend another USD 9.3 million to strengthen the ACC.

[3](#). (U) Vice President Kunda affirmed during a December 9 International Anti-Corruption Day event co-hosted by the ACC and Transparency International Zambia that Parliament will consider new anti-corruption legislation, including an asset recovery law, and review existing laws to incorporate language referencing international anti-corruption protocols ratified by Zambia. Banda stated on December 2 that the GRZ recognizes the need to strengthen laws on assets declaration, forfeiture of proceeds of crime, and whistle-blower protection. Banda also said that his government will encourage the use of integrity committees and the Public Service Code of Ethics in Cabinet ministries to improve public service delivery.

¶4. (SBU) The anti-corruption campaign signaled a shift in the Banda administration's rhetoric from defending itself against criticisms over its recent handling of high-profile corruption cases and attacking critics to focusing on its anti-corruption bona fides. A December 8 op-ed published in a government-controlled newspaper underscored the administration's shift in strategy, noting that "President Banda has continued the fight against corruption albeit in a different approach than his predecessor."

¶5. (C) COMMENT: Although GRZ's public anti-corruption campaign strikes a positive tone, the Banda administration must back up its words with deeds and carry out its pledges. The new campaign should also resolve pending corruption cases previously handled by the TFC. The administration's public re-commitment to fight corruption was clearly aimed at blunting criticism raised by the press, donor countries, and Civil Society Organizations over what has been seen as backsliding by the GRZ in its commitment to fight corruption (refs A-C). Implementing the National Anti-Corruption Policy, beefing up the ACC with donor (primarily DFID) support, and establishing an FIU will help better position the GRZ in its fight against corruption. However, the administration has seemed more interested in neutralizing corruption cases rather than fighting corruption, and it remains to be seen whether the GRZ's renewed commitment will translate into meaningful results. END COMMENT.
BOOTH